

MORNING MEDITATION

Monday, Sixth Week in Ordinary Time

**Our God is abundant in love and steadfast in mercy. He saves us,
not because we trust in a symbol, but because we trust in a Savior.**

(Max Lucado)

Genesis 4:1-15, 25

Story of Cain and Abel – the story of how sin has a tendency to spread, unless it is mastered. Tension mounts between farmer and pastor ending up in the farmer killing the pastor. The Lord says: “sin is a demon lurking at the door: his surge is toward you, yet you can be his master.”

**“Do well. Hold up your head.” Master your weaknesses and sinfulness. You can do it.
Let not sin master you!**

Psalm 50

**The God of gods, the LORD,
has spoken and summoned the earth
from the rising of the sun to its setting.
From Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God shines forth.**

Mark 8:11-13

The Pharisees seek a sign from Christ that will substantiate his claim. Jesus refuses to give a sign. The tendency of the age in which Jesus lived was to look for God in the abnormal, in extraordinary events. They believed that when the messiah came the most startling things would happen. This is the kind of sign the Pharisees were looking for. They looked for events that would defy the laws of nature.

To Jesus the whole world was full of signs – the corn in the corn field, the leaven in the loaf, the lilies of the field, the sparrows in the air, the fishes in the sea – God did not have to break in from outside the world. He was in the world for anyone who had eyes to see.

Earth’s crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he, who sees, takes off his shoes,

The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries.” (Elizabeth Barrett Browning)

Look beyond what you see! The daily miracles of night and day and the beauty of all common things proclaim simply and purely the presence of God...

Saint of the Day, February 13 - St. Catherine del Ricci and 14 other saints are remembered this day.

St. Catherine was born Alessandra Lucrezia Romola de' Ricci in Florence in 1522. Her baptismal name was Alexandrina, but she took the name of Catherine upon entering religious life. From her early childhood, she manifested a great love of prayer. At age 6 or 7, her father enrolled her in a school run by a monastery of Benedictine nuns, near their home, where her aunt, Luisa de' Ricci, was the abbess. There she developed a lifelong devotion to the Passion of Christ.

After a brief return home, she entered the convent of the Dominican nuns at Prat in Tuscany, in her fourteenth year. In May 1535 she received the religious habit from her uncle, Friar Timoteo de' Ricci, O.P., who was confessor to the convent, and the religious name of Catherine, after the Dominican tertiary, Catherine of Siena.

Her novitiate was a time of trial. She would experience ecstasies during her routine, which caused her to seem asleep during community prayer services, dropping plates and food, so much so that the community began to question her competence, if not her sanity. Eventually the other Sisters became aware of the spiritual basis for her behavior.

While very young, she was chosen Mistress of Novices, then subprioress, and at twenty-five years of age she became perpetual prioress. As the prioress, she was an effective and greatly admired administrator. She was an advisor on various topics to princes, bishops and cardinals. She corresponded with three figures who were destined to become popes: Pope Marcellus II, Pope Clement VIII, and Pope Leo XI. An expert on religion, management and administration, her advice was widely sought. She gave counsel both in person and through exchanging letters. It is reported that she was extremely effective and efficient in her work, managing her priorities very well. She also was an ascetic, engaged in extreme fasting and other forms of penance and sacrifice. She died in 1590 after a prolonged illness.

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